WONDERFUL WORKS OF GOD.

A NARRATIVE

OF THE

WONDERFUL FACTS

IN THE

CASE OF ANSEL BOURNE,

OF

WESTERLY, RHODE ISLAND,

WHO, IN THE MIDST OF OPPOSITION TO THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION WAS SUDDENLY STRUCK BLIND, DUMB AND DEAF; AND AFTER EIGHTEEN DAYS WAS SUDDENLY AND COMPLETELY RESTORED, IN THE PRESENCE OF HUNDREDS OF PERSONS, IN THE CHRISTIAN CHAPEL, AT WESTERLY, ON THE 15TH OF NOVEMBER, 1857.

WRITTEN UNDER HIS DIRECTION.

IRVINGTON, N. J.:
PUBLISHED BY MOSES CUMMINGS,
OFFICE OF THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.
1858.

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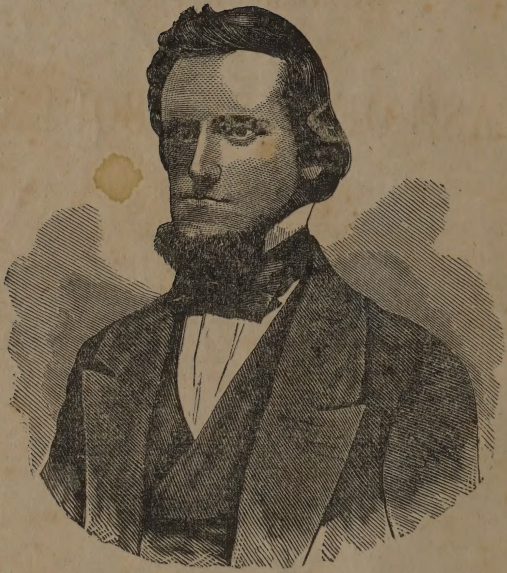

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THE NARRATIVE

OF ANSEL BOURNE.

ANSEL BOURNE was born in the city of New York, on the 8th of July, 1826. His father, Thomas Bourne, was a native of Sandwich, in the State of Massachusetts. His mother, whose maiden name was Betsy Green, was a native of Warwick, Rhode Island.

At the tender age of seven, ANSEL was deprived of a father's care and protection. His mother, at the same time, was subjected to the trials incident to poverty. Three children, of whom the subject of this narrative was the youngest, were dependent upon her, and these circumstances naturally contributed to decide the measure and character of their education. Their privileges at school were somewhat abridged by the stern necessities which controlled the mother, and the education which she was able to give her children partook largely of practical ideas.

At the age of ten, ANSEL was sent to Dartmouth, Massachusetts, where he remained with a family by the name of Phillips about three years. Here his privileges to obtain an education were such as too often falls to the lot of poor boys. The precious time passed away without affording him those privileges of improvement, which were the most desirable as a preparation for after years.

From Dartmouth he went, with his mother, to Oneysville, Rhode Island, in which vicinity he remained about two years, all of which was spent in labor in factories, with no privilege of attending school. At the age of fifteen, he went to live with Mr. George J. Harris, of Oneysville, as an apprentice to the trade of a carpenter, where he remained about three

years. While with Mr. Harris, ANSEL enjoyed no other privileges of study or learning than those inseparably connected with his trade.

During his stay with him, his attention was called to religious subjects, in the midst of a powerful revival of religion, under the labors of Rev. Martin Cheney. With some hundreds who, at that time, united with the Free-Will Baptist Church, he was one. On the day of his baptism, sixty-three participated in submission to the ordinance.

He thinks that he was, at that time, sincerely devout, and intended to lead a christian life. But the time of his life was that in which the passions of nature are most active, the future of life most flattering and deceitful, and all moral resolutions most likely to be overcome by surrounding influences. He was under the necessity of working and associating with all kinds of persons, and was deprived of the benefits of those regular habits and religious companions, which it is the good fortune of many to enjoy. Under these circumstances, he lost sight of his religious vows, and failed to be reminded of his first duty, and his soul's great interest, by those whose brotherly care, at such a time, would have been as valuable as the visits of angels.

After leaving Mr. Harris, realizing that without education a man is unfitted for the services of this world, or even to escape its innumerable snares, he became anxious for improvement in that direction. He desired to master his business, and for this purpose, he applied himself to the study of mathematics, and to useful reading, during the leisure or evening hours. This being all the opportunity afforded him, he used it to the utmost of his ability.

On the 14th of October, 1844, he gave his hand in marriage to Miss Sarah A. Woodmansee, of Richmond, Rhode Island. The marriage took place in South Kingston. Soon after, they went to the city of Providence, and there established their residence.

Within the two following years, he built a house, for his future home, at Cranston, Rhode Island, into which he moved and lived for a time. Through the dishonesty of a man, who has since suffered much for his crimes, he was deprived of his intended and coveted home. It is so, in this

world, that the innocent often seem to suffer more for the crimes of the guilty, than do the guilty themselves. This wicked man professed to be a pious man, and thus, at the same time, dishonored the name of religion and the humanity of man.

In the year 1847, Mr. BOURNE removed again to the city of Providence, where he remained only for a very few months, when he removed to Pawtuxet.

While in that place there was an unusual religious interest in connection with the Free-Will Baptist Church, and he became again religiously awake. He had once fallen away before, which he so far attributed to brotherly neglect, that he now thought to remain separate from any church. He did not, therefore, unite with the church. This unfortunate idea and presumption—that one can live a christian and keep aloof from christians—served to prepare the way for a deeper fall into the ways of unbelief. When a man derives no strength nor encouragement from the sympathy and brotherly advice of christian familiarity, but mingles with those outside of the church, he will feel the full influence of the world's estimate of the church, which is always false. The world sees the church with an eye of enmity and envy. The imperfections of church members are judged without charity by the world. And pure and holy as christianity is, many who profess it, will prove wicked and unprincipled. If a man will be surrounded by christian influences, therefore, he should not go out into the world to secure them.

The corruptions among christians—the enmities existing and perpetuated between professed brethren—the easy virtue of whole churches—all presented the idea of almost an embodiment of evil. The church was contemplated in a fearful, terrible light. Its sectarianism—how it put to shame its great profession of love and unity! Its dishonest members—how they denied the worth and principle of holiness! Its toleration of popular wrongs—how it put all its pleas of virtue to reproach!

With such a fearful view of the church—a view which every man must take, who sees it in its worst light—how easy it is for skepticism to assume an honorable position and character. She even seizes the arm of each looker-on, and says

—"See you not that the church is the very place where the being of a God is disproved? Would a holy God allow people to assume his name and character, and then conduct in such a manner? Is there a God above us?"

Such questions always seem but suggestions of reason, to a troubled and dissatisfied mind, when urged on by the spirit and voice of the world. They seem to be the voice of common sense, in the minds of the irreligious, the passionate and the proud; but they are entertained, after all, because of a false view of the relation of God to his earth-born creatures, and of the nature of his government over men. They are really predicated upon the idea that God should have prevented all moral evil, by allowing men no possible power of doing wrong. If this were true, a discoverable fault in our existence must be this: we ought not to have had any power of volition, or will; nor power of moral election, or choice. We should have been made incapable of planning anything, of designing, or of executing any design, except as mere machines.

Deistic fatalism ascribes all things to the determinate counsel and wisdom of "a great first cause"; but to a soul so deeply dissatisfied with the things that are, as that soul is which has fallen from a condition of christian love to the restless gnawings of a backslidden spirit, it is impossible to contemplate the crimes of men in the light of deistic charity —that their reckless rascalities were made a positive duty by the laws of eternal destiny, stereotyped in nature from all eternity. Such a soul sits in judgment, upon a throne of burning fire, to condemn the wickedness of the church as entirely inexcusable, and as doubly—almost infinitely—hateful. It cannot accept of deism, nor the apology which it makes for sin, including *sin in the church*. Its hatred rises up like a volcanic fire, and pours a stream of death upon everything around. It breaks all the bands of faith asunder, and stamps indignantly upon the very idea of a God. It cannot tolerate the crimes of professed christians, and denies that a God of goodness can exist, who will permit them; thus denying that forbearance can be an attribute of divine wisdom and goodness.

Mr. Bourne had experienced that treatment in his first

church connection, which continually arose in his mind to urge him onward towards atheism. When he had become cold in his religious interests, and neglectful of his church duties, his affections for the church were weakened. Then the case was aggravated by his learning, that not merely his faults were freely commented upon by his professed brethren, but some of them descended to assail and injure him by false and slanderous representations. It was the season of fearful storms to his soul.

The memory of what he had experienced at the hand of those who professed to be christians, in other places, contributed to hasten his course to positive atheism. For about eleven months, the question, "Is there a God?" was constantly before him, his mind inclining more and more to answer, "*There is no God!*" If christian professors could realize what a fearful power their words and actions have, when saying or doing evil, to urge such a person into atheism, they would be more watchful. If they would consider what a power of influence they possess, in the simple performance of the attentions of love, to the weak, the wavering and the tried, they would shudder to think of their enormous sins of omission and commission. Mr. BOURNE has experienced the dreadful consequences of disappointment, when expecting of christian professors the full exhibition of christian principles and christian love. He now desires to exhort all the professed followers of Christ to attend faithfully to the duties of christian brotherhood.

After about eleven months, his mind became fully established in atheism. In the secret chambers of his cloud-covered soul, he wrote, as with a pen of iron, the sentence of fearless and yet fearful unbelief, "THERE IS NO GOD."

The time had been when he only allowed himself to be careless of Christian obligations—neglected the Bible, the prayer-meeting, the closet, and the meetings and communions of the church. From this condition he had traveled in the downward road, until he despised the church. Then wicked men said to him, "BOURNE, were I a member of that church, I would leave it." This advice was not without its influence. He soon got down so low that words of profanity tasted sweet upon his lips. He feared not to profane the name of

God. All this came from neglecting christian privileges and duties, hastened by the sight of so many crimes among professed christians. Think of it, Christian professor, when you neglect the Bible, the prayer-meeting, or the ordinances of God! Think of it, indeed, when you cheat your brethren, or speak evil of them, or in any way do them injustice! You are driving them towards atheism. It will not hurt their faith for infidels to treat them so; but it will for you to do it, because you profess better things.

After being revived at Pawtuxet, and then again turning back to doubt—and after a fearful struggle for the most of a year, questioning, "Is there a God?" he had come to the fearful answer, "There is no God." Then the question arose in his mind, "Are you willing to preach this to others?" To this he readily answered, "*No.*" For, after all his struggles, his doubts and his unbelief, he knew that true Christians were the best people in the world, and the happiest. So he made no proclamation of his unbelief, being willing that all should enjoy their own minds. He never even told his wife how he had settled the great question.

His mind was deeply locked in unbelief; but he yielded not to the demon of intemperance. He says that he does not think he ever drank a pint of liquor in all his life; and he has seldom even tasted cider. He wishes this to be understood, because he has been represented as having become dissipated.

When he became so thoroughly atheistic, he still said within himself, "If there is a God, and he will show me from his hand, I will believe." This seems almost like the conduct of the murderers of Christ, who exclaimed, as they crucified him, "If he be the Son of God let him come down from the cross, and we will believe him." It would not seem that such a request could be granted, after all the evidences which surround the gospel had been trodden under foot; and the soul with all its powers and faculties had settled down into the deep and dismal darkness of a terrible unbelief.—But the cup of divine mercy sometimes seems perfectly to overflow; when he not only chooses to save a soul, but to select an instrument to use in the plans and purposes of his wide-spreading benevolence. This was the case when he

called Saul of Tarsus to be a witness for him. And perhaps thousands may yet be convinced that it has been so in the case of Mr. Bourne. Every true christian will desire that it may prove so.

For nearly ten years his mind was under the dark and apparently impenetrable cloud of unbelief. His affections were chilled under its influence. His unbelief grew stronger and stronger. Nine times was he brought seemingly very near to death's door, but never did he desire prayer—never did he think of God. To him, life was all here, and the grave was an eternal sleep. Afflictions fell frequently upon him; but were never received as a chastening. They were attributed to chance.

He hated churches, ministers, and professors, and some of them most bitterly. He often worked so hard, to get along in the world, when not well, as to very greatly exhaust his strength and weary his system.

On Thursday, August 6, 1857, he was brought home from South Kingston, in a condition of sickness, perhaps induced by laboring beyond his strength at the place of Mr. Rowland G. Hazard. It has been reported that Mr. Bourne had been subject to fits. He does not sanction these reports, or acknowledge any truth in them. They are stories coined by persons whose motives were best known to themselves.—After reaching home, (accompanied by Mr. J. E. Brown,) he rested through Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, and was very much restored. Feeling well and comfortable on Monday morning, August 10, he was disposed to return to his work at South Kingston, a distance of near thirty miles. But Mrs. Bourne persuaded him to relinquish the idea, and remain at home that week. He therefore remained and occupied himself with labors of improvement upon his own place—painting, and so forth, until Thursday night. On Friday, August 14, the hottest day of the season, he went to work in his garden. Between the hours of one and two p.m. he experienced much pain in his head, and was obliged to relinquish his work and go into the house. After staying perhaps three-quarters of an hour the pain left him and he returned to his work in the garden. He worked until it was dark, at night, when he went into the house; and enjoying

refreshing sleep through the night. In the morning, on Saturday, he felt considerable pain in his head, which continued through the day. At night the pain ceased so that he again enjoyed a good night's rest. On Sunday morning pain again returned, but at noon it passed off, and he determined to return to South Kingston on the next morning.

On the afternoon of Sunday, which was the 16th of August, having no scruples about working on Sunday as freely as any day, he went to work, preparing to leave home again for awhile. About 4 o'clock he went out to cut some wood, where, having some feeling in his head which he does not remember so that he can describe it, he put his hand to his head, and this was the last that he can remember that took place, or of which he was conscious at the time, until Tuesday the 18th. From Tuesday morning until Wednesday in the afternoon he was perfectly conscious of his condition, except as friends affirm that he was a little delirious on Tuesday night. He run down rapidly, and his restoration or recovery became very doubtful. This was understood to be the judgment of his physician, Dr. Thurston. On Wednesday his mother visited him. She asked him if he was ready to die. He answered, that he was. But this answer was given without a single thought of God, or a state of existence beyond the grave. All his thoughts of anxiety were about his family. To leave them was painful.

Soon after, a change took place and he rapidly recovered. In about three weeks he was able to return to his work at South Kingston. It was on Monday, September 7, that he went to that place. He was able to work by day, but could not rest at night. on account of neuralgia and severe pain in his head. On Friday, by advice of his friends, he returned home again. On Monday, September 14, Dr. Thurston visited him, and continued his attendance, by frequent visits, until about the first of October. During this time, Mr. Charles Maxon of Westerly, a seventh-day Baptist, came to him on Sunday and wished him to go to South Kingston, on some business which required his presence, in order to settlement. When he came, Mr. BOURNE had got ready to go and spend the afternoon, together with his wife and family, at the house of Mr. James Gavit, about three-fourths of a

mile distant. He went to Mr. Gavit's, and drew his youngest child, which so entirely exhausted and overcome him that he got no rest that night. On Monday morning he got ready and went with Mr. Maxon to South Kingston. When he got there he went through the various apartments of a new house upon which he had been employed. The house had recently been plastered, and was cold and damp throughout. When he got through the house he was too much exhausted and overcome to attend to any business, and went to the boarding-house and laid down for some little time. A cold chill or spasm came upon him there, which deprived him of his strength. Dr. Hazard was called and administered to him. During this illness he was perfectly conscious of everything around him. (Mr. BOURNE wishes to be particular upon all these points, so that friends or foes, infidels or christians, may have the whole case just as it is, to consider upon and judge.) On the same day he was carried home, weak and helpless. He soon began to improve, and in about a week was again able to go out. He continued to improve, until the 28th of October, when he thought himself about well.

On Sunday the 25th of October he spent the day and evening at his own house, playing at cards. He was so settled in his ideas of right and privilege to do as he pleased on that day, that if the christian minister who lived next door to him—Rev. John Taylor—had come into his house, he is sure he should not have moved from his seat. Some of those who thus spent the day with him have since united with the Christian Church in Westerly. This playing was not for money, but merely for amusement. He has never played for money.

At the same time, a protracted meeting was in progress in the Christian Church, where Rev. J. Taylor preached. Mr. BOURNE did not go to any of the meetings, nor pay any attention to them, only so far as occasionally to make such remarks about them as his dislike to them prompted. To Mr. Taylor he felt no disposition to show any favor, but cherished a decided feeling of enmity. Toward a certain member of that church—Mr. Joshua Thompson, jr.—he also felt and openly avowed his hatred and enmity. He had told

Mr. Thompson, some four years before, on occasion of a settlement, that he would injure him in his business whenever he could, and would never speak to him again. He treated the revival which was in progress with contempt, and kept aloof from all its influences as much as it was in the power of man to do.

On the 28th of October he started for the village of Westerly, about one mile to the north of his house. He designed to make arrangements so as to return again to his work at South Kingston. When about leaving the house, having got to the door, his little daughter, not three years old, seemed to be animated with a new and peculiar spirit. Unaccustomed so to act, she followed and took her father by the hand and bade him "*good bye.*" When he had opened the door, and was about to pass out, she renewedly seized him by the hand and urged him to go and bid her mother "good bye." He yielded to her entreaties and returned to give his wife a parting salutation. After this, he left the house to go to the village. The road toward Westerly village, after leaving his house, first rises gradually for a short distance, then continues at about the same altitude for some distance, when it begins to descend toward the village. When he had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile, and had begun to descend toward the village, he was perceived by some persons to be walking quite fast, as though feeling quite well. He was conscious of no unusual feelings, until a thought came up vividly in his mind, that he ought to go to meeting. This thought was connected with no conscientious feeling of duty to go to meeting, but seemed a mere internal and unaccountable suggestion. To the suggestion he answered, "*Where?*" To this inquiry he was answered in the same manner, "To the Christian Chapel." To this idea his spirit rose up in decided and bitter opposition, and he said within himself, "I would rather be struck deaf and dumb forever, than to go there." He continued onward for eighteen or twenty rods, when a friend of his passed by him on a lumber-reach, to whom he bowed as the man passed. Immediately after, he felt dizzy, and desired to sit down. Looking ahead he saw nothing that he could sit down on. Turning back he saw at a little distance a flat stone close to the side of a stone

wall. He went to that immediately and sat down. He leaned his head against the wall and felt immediately relieved of his dizziness; and supposed he should be able in a minute or two to proceed on his business. He then looked up the road, toward home, and saw an aged man, Mr. John Thompson, approaching him, on foot, beside his wagon.—Mr. Thompson was near the place where he had been a few minutes before, when the idea was suggested that he ought to go to meeting. In an instant after beholding Mr. Thompson, it seemed as though some powerful hand drew something down over his head, and then over his face, and finally over his whole body; depriving him his sight, his hearing, and his speech; and rendering him perfectly helpless. Yet he had as perfect power of thought, as at any time in his life. His mind instantly went back to the conflict of his thoughts, some eight or ten minutes before. The terrible decision and choice, "I would rather be struck deaf and dumb forever, than go to the Christian Chapel," came before him with awful significance. It seemed that God had truly taken him at his word, and given him what he had chosen. The decision of ten years before, "If there is a God, and he will show me from his hand, I will believe in him," now came to memory. In this, too, it appeared that God had taken him at his word. He trembled, and his soul, as though sinking in deep waters, acknowledged, "There is a God." The sins of a whole life-time came before his mind in an instant, like a flash of lightning. And how awful was everything! He was not only deaf and dumb, but, more dreadful still, he was perfectly blind. He saw no one—he heard no one—he could call to no one—and all his strength was gone. Then the dreadful question, "Am I to remain in this condition?" He thought that he was about to die.—And he dared not, in his secret soul, to ask God to take him to himself. It appeared to him that such a request would be a greater insult to a holy and just God than even all his former sins. He dared not to think of so insulting God. It appeared to him that if he must die it became him to take the cup of God's eternal displeasure without so far objecting as to ask God to turn it from him. He acknowledged the justice of his terrible judgments; but now he had no power

even to confess to men that he believed in that God whom he had dishonored. He could not speak, to ask forgiveness of those whose forgiveness he would have gladly sought.—His soul was wholly and terribly imprisoned, where no sympathyzing friend could come to give words of comfort or hope. The last interview at home, not half an hour before—how significant it was now! The movements of that dear little daughter—so entirely unusual—how they now revealed the workings of an invisible power! She had been made as one of God's angels, for the time, to convince her unbelieving father. And oh! how that extorted "good-bye" sounded anew upon the very ears of his soul! "And is it true, that I have given to my loved wife, and my dear little daughter, the last and final salutation?" Is it possible for any one, who has experienced no such awful condition—smitten of God and shut out from the light and hearing of this world—to realize anything of the anguish of that hour? Let no impious trifler dream that these circumstances could be easily endured. Yet they must be endured. They were endured, and have left their burning foot-prints in the soul that then seemed sinking under a weight of dreadful guilt and condemnation.

After the brief space of what he thinks could not have been more than two or three minutes, he was taken up and put in a wagon, and carried away. He was perfectly sensible of all this, although he could hear nothing, see nothing, and communicate nothing. He felt the motion of the wagon and the touch of hands, and supposed he was being carried towards home, which was the case. He knew and realized perfectly when he was carried into the house, and placed in a chair. He wondered why they should have placed him in a chair rather than on a bed. In a little time after, he felt the touch of hands again, which took him from the chair and placed him on a bed. He afterwards learned that his wife was not in the house when he was brought in, and this fact accounts for his being first placed in a chair.

Doctor William T. Thurston was called immediately. In a letter which he wrote to the Providence Journal, under date of November 20th, he says of this visit, "I heard nothing more of him [after the 2d of October] till the 28th of that

month, when, in haste, I was summoned to him. On reaching his bedside, I found him perfectly insensible—very much in the condition of a person in a fainting fit. The pupils of his eyes were quite insensible to light, widely dilated, and not contracting on the application of sudden and vivid light. He was, in fact, perfectly insensible."

Mr. Bourne does not wish to question the honesty and sincerity of Doctor Thurston, when he says, "He was, in fact, perfectly insensible." He supposes the Doctor might have thought so, for he gave him no evidence to the contrary. Yet, he says, he was perfectly sensible to the touch of hands, which he supposed, at the time, to be those of Doctor Thurston. He knew perfectly well when his eye-lids were touched and drawn; yet, he saw nothing, he heard nothing, and lay helpless as an infant. When different hands touched him, he reasoned with himself, and thought he knew which was the Doctor, and which was his wife, when they were handling him in any way. When touched, at certain times, he felt confident that it was by his children. He was not insensible, as the Doctor seems to have supposed. His mind was perfectly active all of the time, but he was unable to communicate any thought or feeling which he had to others, so that they could know that he was sensible of what was passing. About him all was as silent as though there were neither a God, nor life, nor motion, in the whole wide universe. This silence was as though the soul had been cast into a deep, bottomless and shoreless sepulchre, where dismal silence was to reign eternally. And it was also night there, without a single ray of light. As one justly cast off from God, he felt the horrors of that dreadful idea—"cast into outer darkness." He fully acknowledged the justice of God in his condemnation, and spurned from his soul the thought of insulting God by asking mercy for such a sinner. The only offering he could think to make of himself was as a victim of sins too great for even the mercy of God, and as an offering fit only for the fiery sword of justice. There was to him no terror in the thought of being eternally condemned and lost, for it seemed as though the justice of God must require it. He did not love God, but he honored his justice, and consented

in his heart to the full execution of the decisions of his majesty. The night, so dismal and awful, wore on. The sins of his past life flashed up as fiery thoughts, streaming out, in terrible lights, from a land which had been passed. He scorned to ask for mercy, when it was not due. The sentiment of his soul was, "Let me be broken under the rod of his displeasure! I fully merit it! I acknowledge that God is righteous, though he takes vengeance on the guilty! To all my crimes I will not add that of insulting God with a plea for mercy! It is proper that his majesty should remain unchanged!"

The mercy of God, to the penitent, is greater than the sin-sick soul can comprehend. When he hates sin so that he would call down the judgments of God upon his own guilty soul, and exclaims, "Though I be damned, yet will I bear the cross of Christ, and cling to its blood-stained arms!" it is then the scepter of pardon is presented to his lips, and the star-gemmed crown is presented to his eye.

During the night, he gained some strength, and at a time which he supposes to have been near morning, he was anxious to know where he was, and whether he had really been placed in his own house and among his friends. But how could he know? He recollected the form of the bedstead-posts, and the position which the bed occupied, upon which he supposed he was then lying. He felt of the posts, and thought he was certain of their identity. He reached out near the head of the bed, to see if there was a window, and found there was. He was then fully satisfied that he was in his own house.

Everything was so perfectly still, at times, and he seemed so entirely alone, that his very existence seemed so mysterious as to suggest a doubt whether he existed in the body. He would feel about himself, and take hold of his own limbs, to settle the doubt.

Completely shut out from all communication with mortal beings, he read over the history of his life, as that alone which could be of any interest to him. He felt entirely shut out from communion with God, because of sin, and knew the dreadful reality of being separated from all intercourse with his fellow beings. He was shut up in the dismal dungeon of despair

At a certain time, which he supposed to be morning, he felt movements on his bed, and soon was satisfied that his little children were with him, and were kissing him. Their familiar expression of "*Pa!*" he could no longer hear, nor any sound which their movements made. He could see nothing of these loved ones, but he was sure they were there, and that they were addressing him as they had done before. But the silence was too deep to be broken, and appeared too awful to be endured.

In the afternoon, about twenty-six hours from the time he was stricken down, when subject to no unusual sensation or feeling in his head, his sight was restored in an instant. He saw his wife and one of his neighbors standing near, with their lips in motion. They appeared to be addressing him, as though unconscious of his inability to hear. It appeared to him, then, that they were ignorant of his deafness. He made signs of writing, on his hand, when his wife immediately procured a pen and paper. While she was gone after pen and paper, the question arose in his mind, "Are you now willing to ask forgiveness of all whom you have injured?" To this question, he answered affirmatively. When she came to him, he took pen and paper, and wrote that he could not hear.

When he had informed her thus, that he could hear nothing, a flood of tears from her eyes told him of her deep anguish; and she continued to weep, as though suffering the bitterness of grief, through the night. This again brought him to consider the awful sinfulness of a life which had been brought by the hand of God to such circumstances. It so far affected him, that he thought but little of further communications to his wife at that time.

At the time his sight was restored, his children had gone to bed, although it was much earlier than they usually retired. In the morning, they came from the room where they had slept, and crawled into the bed with their father, one on each side. This was the first time he had seen them since the little Melissa had taken him by the hand and led him to her mother. All was silence. Their movements and their kisses of love were noiseless. He could see them, and feel them, but their expressions to him were lost on vacant air

He heard nothing. He could utter no thought to them. How dear were they, and yet how separated! He was completely overcome. He felt that hs was separated from his children, while yet with them. He was denied all intercourse with them, and yet they were about him as they had ever been. He felt that it was the hand of a just God which had been laid upon him, and which had closed his ear against the sweet tones of childish love. It was God who had fettered his tongue, that he should not speak to them. And he felt that in all this, God had only taken him at his word. He had only answered the prayer of a rebel creature. It was justice inlaid with mercy. It was mercy bearing a scepter of wrath. He felt hemmed in on every side—condemned, stricken, cast down, rendered powerless to reply against God; yet he lived. He lived to see his children approach him, gliding noiselessly along like shadows, and fondly caressing him; but they seemed as other beings to him, although he knew them so perfectly, there was something so awful in their unnatural silence.

During the forenoon, remembering the enmity he had cherished toward Rev. John Taylor, he wrote upon a slate, requesting that he might be sent for. This request was complied with, and Mr. Taylor came in immediately. Mr. Bourne asked his forgiveness, by writing. Mr. Taylor seized his hand, pressing it so earnestly, and with evident sympathy, that he felt fully assured that his enmity was freely forgiven. Mr. Bourne inquired of him if he would go after Mr. Joshua Thompson, jr.—toward whom he had cherished so much enmity that he had said if he saw him drowning he would not help him. Mr. Taylor readily consented to go. Before going, he asked Mr. Bourne if he was ready to die. He answered, "I am ready that God's will should be done; but I am not a christian." Mr. Taylor then wrote, requesting him to pray. Mr. Bourne wrote, "I cannot pray. I cannot offer such an insult to God as to ask him now to take the remnant of my life," or words to that effect. Mr. Taylor then asked, "Are you willing that I should pray?" He was answered, "I cannot hear nor speak, but I can see and feel." Mr. Taylor then took hold of his hand and kneeled down to pray. The most dreadful feelings now arose with

Mr. Bourne. He felt as though he had consented to the greatest insult being offered to God of all in his life, in allowing Mr. Taylor to pray for him that God would take him. If he had possessed worlds, he would have given all, that moment, to have been able to take back his consent to that prayer.

When he closed his prayer, which Mr. Bourné could understand no more than he could judge from the motion of his lips, he went away, and Mr. Bourne supposed he would go immediately after Mr. Joshua Thompson, jr. Mr. Taylor did not so understand, and the day wore on without the appearance of Mr. Thompson. This was a disappointment to Mr. Bourne, and he was led again to review his past life. It seemed to him that he had said and done so much that Mr. Thompson could not forgive him. The dreadful anguish which he had before experienced, was then renewed, and his remorse was awful indeed. How awful is the thought of having sinned until the mercy of a good man is forfeited and lost! And how much more terrible is the thought of having sinned beyond the reach of God's mercy! Forbearance cannot last forever. Mr. Bourne felt this.—He feared that it had become his case. He more than feared it. He felt it. In the sight of God and men he felt that he was condemned.

Toward evening, Mr. Charles W. Thompson, a brother of Mr. Joshua Thompson, jr., came in, and took him by the hand. He inquired after his health, and then added, "Will not your brother come?"

Just as Mr. Bourne wrote this question, and put it to Mr. Thompson, his brother entered. He saw him approach, and he seemed to glide up to him like a shadow, for to him his approach was as noiseless as though the man had been a spirit only. He then took his slate and wrote, "Will you forgive me?" The answer of Mr. Thompson relieved him greatly. He felt that if he must die, and die unforgiven of God, he wished to be forgiven by every man he had injured. Those whose forgiveness he had asked had so readily manifested a willingness to forgive, that it afforded great relief to his anguished soul.

As soon as he had become reconciled to his fellow-men,

with whom he had been at enmity, he began to feel as though there were a way open for him to approach God.—This is one of the truest evidences of a divine influence upon the sinner's soul, that he cannot hide any evil conduct toward his fellow-men, and come before the Lord. The artillery of God's fearful displeasure is pointed against the man who has sinned against his neighbor and will not make recompense as far as it is possible for him to do it. God will not suffer such a man to approach the throne of his mercy. No man can love God and be accepted of him, while he hates and injures his fellow-men; or, having injured them, will not make restitution. Sins against man, hatreds and enmities, are a deep ditch around the temple of divine mercy, which prevent all access. As God loves men, and sent his Son to seek and save the guilty; he will require every sinner to love those they have injured, and those by whom they have been injured; and forgive injuries suffered, and repair injuries inflicted; and it must be so, or they must remain away from his presence, and unforgiven.

Mr. Bourne, with his ear closed against the hearing of the gospel, and with the influence of ten years of atheism upon him, perceived his first duty in a manner which is most wonderful to contemplate; and with a clearness of moral vision which seems little less miraculous than would be the resurrection of a dead man from the grave. He dared not to think of approaching God until he had become reconciled to his fellow-men.

As soon as he had effected a reconciliation with his fellow-men, he felt a great measure of relief. He then felt emboldened to approach God. He began, in the solemn and silent depths of his soul, to offer unutterable prayer. His tongue was chained to his teeth when he attempted to utter words. He could use it freely when eating, to move his food. He could use it to clean his teeth, as freely as need be. But when he attempted to form words, it was as though chained to his forward teeth. He says that the idea of his having no use of his tongue is wholly erroneous. But he could not use it for speech. He could pray. But his prayers were the supplications of the mind; his bodily powers not participating in the act of supplication.

For three or four days after this, he could not meet his neighbors without weeping. They were all exceedingly kind and obliging. Not only those who have before been mentioned as visiting him, but others; among whom were Mr. James Gavitt, who has since become a member of the Christian Church in Westerly; and Mr. Charles Pendleton, whose kindness he shall remember with gratitude, and for whose salvation he will have strong and fervent desires.

Mr. Bourne then requested a prayer-meeting at his house. Although he could lend no listening ear to the supplications of those present, yet as he saw their faces turned toward heaven, and their lips in motion, he felt assured that they prayed for him.

He became calm. He considered the past, and saw that his desires had been granted, although the fact was terrible in its character. He could have met his mother with more calmness than when he met her last. He became self-possessed, and was able again to meet his friends without being overcome as he was at first. He wrote letters to his friends, signifying his decision to be henceforth on the Lord's side. In this way he sought to confess Christ. To these letters he received kind and affectionate replies.

On Wednesday, November 11, just two weeks from the time that he was stricken down, he was carried to the Christian Chapel. As he passed along he could see the people moving and receive visible tokens of their recognition, but it was all in silence. All appeared strange and deeply impressive. He could no longer hear the sweet and melodious sounds of the human voice, when raised for friendly salutations. People seemed gliding about so noiselessly, that to him it was as though he was among the moving dead. Passing into the Chapel his mind reverted to the circumstances and feelings he had experienced two weeks before. The effect was overwhelming. His feelings were very deep as he entered the vestry among the people he had a little time before so much despised.

As he entered the house he was introduced to Rev. Moses Cummings, of Irvington, New Jersey. The introduction was then no more than a face-to-face recognition of a stranger, whose name and residence he afterwards learned.

He wrote a brief message upon his slate, which was read to the assembly. He then wished to signify to the people his determination to live for the honor of God, by standing up before the congregation and holding up his hands. He was informed that the privilege was free for him to do so.—The appearance of Mr. BOURNE at that time is described in the Christian Messenger, edited by Mr. Cummings, as follows: "He was carried to the Church, his communications were read, after which with streaming eyes he arose and lifted his arms toward heaven and his thoughts on him who reigns there, and expressed as best he could his gratitude for God's mercy."

On the next day he went again to the church, and presented the following communication, which he had written before leaving home:

"Mr. Taylor:—Will you please read the following?—I thank God for another privilege of meeting with you, and although I do not expect to do much good by coming here, as I cannot speak, it does me a great deal of good to see others praise God. I know that he has promised where two or three have met together to serve God, there he will be, and that to bless. I feel as though I have been one of the worst of sinners on his footstool. I once knew his goodness, and then departed from it; but I hope the time has come when I may serve God with all my heart, and, oh, may I ever be found working for God, and never again be ashamed to bear my cross and follow him! and I hope the time is not far distant when I can hear and speak and tell what God has done for me! But God's will be done! Christian friends, pray for me! Remember my companion! as we live together here, may we not be separated in heaven! Oh, may my children be brought up in the love of God!"

After this was read, he again desired to lift up his hands towards heaven, as a sign of his continued determination; and this he did as before. The effect upon the people was great. The sight of a man, who stood before them as one smitten of God for his impiety, and still bearing in life evidences of the divine displeasure, was to them a visible manifestation, such as they had never witnessed before. Whatever interpretation they might put upon it, miraculous or only

marvelous, every one, who believed the scriptures, must acknowledge that it had not taken place without his knowledge and power.

On Friday, he again attended meeting, made communication by writing upon his slate, and again held up his hands towards heaven, in the audience of the people. He desired to attend the evening service, which was for preaching, although he could not hear. To accommodate this wish, Mr. Horatio Berry, a member of the Seventh-Day Baptist Church, kindly welcomed him to his house, and to his hospitality. With Mr. Berry he communicated freely, by writing upon his slate, and then felt it his duty to go, the next day, to the meeting where Mr. Berry worshiped, and make known his mind concerning Christ. After the evening service, he was carried home.

On Saturday morning, Mr. Berry came after him, according to his wish, and carried him to the meeting of the Seventh-Day Baptist Church, where a short communication from him was read, and he was permitted to lift up his hands towards heaven, in token of his reverence and love for God. The people knew what he had been, and how he had been stricken down. The sight of him, in such a condition, produced a great effect.

He returned, and in the afternoon attended meeting again at the Christian Chapel, and was received as a member of the church. Concerning the things, the editor of the Christian Messenger, who was present, remarks:—"He attended a number of days in succession, during our tarry, and expressed his wish to be received as a member of the church, which was granted, and he expressed every gratitude in his power for their christian confidence. The effect was great upon those present. Overflowing sympathy seemed to be the order of God's house; and many earnest and most fervent prayers were offered for the return of his hearing and speech, and strong faith was entertained that God would hear and answer."

On the morning of Sunday, November 15th, Mr. Bourne says he felt more anxious than ever to speak. His distress, because he could not speak, was exceedingly great, and he

tried harder than ever to speak to his wife; but he found it impossible. When he considered that he had the most free use of his tongue for everything else but to speak with, and was unable to utter a single word, it seemed to him more than he could endure. In his distress, he tried, but in vain. His children came about him, and it seemed to him that he must die, if he could not speak to them. Immediately, in the same style of the suggestive thoughts just before he was stricken down, on the 18th of October, it seemed as though his thoughts spake to him, saying, "Thou art murmuring! Be still, and all will be well!" He knew and felt, at once, that he was murmuring, and endeavored to dismiss all such feelings.

He went to the morning prayer-meeting at the Christian Chapel, and while there, he felt a strong desire to go to the First-Day or Calvinist Baptist meeting, and hold up his hands for the Lord. He went in the forenoon, made a communication which was read, and there held up his hands to signify to all the people that he would be on the Lord's side. After the service, he started to go to the water, where baptism was to be administered, but was obliged to turn back on account of cold. He went to the Christian Chapel in the afternoon, and informed Mr. Taylor, the pastor, that he felt it his duty to go into the pulpit, and do all in his power to praise the Lord. Mr. Taylor informed him that the privilege would be granted him at the close of the service. He, with others, was to be welcomed to the church, by the right hand of fellowship, that afternoon. During the service, unable to hear, he wrote on his slate what will be hereafter presented. At the close of the discourse, on giving the right hand of fellowship, Rev. Mr. Taylor wrote and presented to him the following: "According to the usages of this Church, I give you my hand in token of our faith in you as a christian. Though you cannot hear, you can feel; if you cannot speak, you can live. The Church pledge themselves to watch over and pray for you, and expect you to live as becometh a child of God; and may God restore speech and hearing, and enable you to use your tongue in his praise."

He then went into the pulpit, where were Messrs. Taylor and Cummings, when Mr. Taylor read for him the following,

which he had finished writing but a few minutes before:—

"I have been led to think, while sitting here, why I have been called from the ranks of sinners, and I have been led to think that God has something for me to do. Why I have come up here to the place of all others which three weeks ago I would have shunned, I know not. But oh! how marvelous are the ways of God! But here I am, for what, I know not. But, oh God! show me what thou wouldst have me to do, and with thy help, O God, I will do it! O sinners! you cannot say this is excitement! O no! for I had not attended any of the meetings! No, I have heard no preaching, no prayers! No, all has seemed still to me! Oh, if you cannot believe now, you would not if one had risen from the dead! Oh, I feel as though the prayers of the dumb had been heard! Why I feel as I do this afternoon, I cannot tell, but I do feel as though God was about to speak to Westerly, in what way I know not—but oh, may God's will be done."

The effect produced by the reading of this communication, upon the audience, was very great; but the effect of what immediately followed was extraordinary beyond description. At the suggestion made by Mr. Taylor for him to rise as he had desired to do, he arose in the pulpit, with the most evident calmness, and lifted up his hands toward heaven. He then, feeling happy, clapped his hands, without hearing the least sound. He then extended his hands apart, as at first, when, in an instant, every manner of sound which came from the moving things of nature broke upon his ear, distinct as a peal of thunder, and his tongue was unloosed instantly, his countenance changed, and he exclaimed in the hearing of the whole, crowded assembly, "Glory to God and the Lamb forever." Big drops of perspiration chased each other downward from his temples.

What immediately followed, is described by the editor of the Christian Messenger, who has before been referred to as present, as follows: "He fell upon his knees, and soon commenced praying in a soft, clear tone of voice, and prais ing God for what he had done. He then gave a most feeling exhortation to his friends, neighbors, and all present, urging them to seek the salvation of their souls and live for

God. We do not think it an exaggeration when we say there was not a dry eye in the house. How wonderful are the works of the Almighty. We were ready to exclaim as some said when the Savior cured the sick of the palsy: 'We have seen strange things to-day.' All seemed to be amazed, and many glorified God for his mighty works which he did in the presence of them all. His hearing and speech were both restored, and many hundreds witnessed a most solemn vow from him to spend the remnant of his days in doing the will of God, so far as he could know it."

Mr. BOURNE had proposed to return home and spend Sabbath evening with his wife and children. But he could now hear; and to him the privilege of hearing that gospel which he had so recently derided constrained him to remain, and enjoy, to him, the first discourse of the series of meetings. On the evening of that day he listened with rapturous joy to the preaching of the gospel.

One circumstance sent a thrill of joy through his heart on that evening. He saw, among those who then manifested a desire to become christians, one come forward who had been with him, at his house, playing at cards all day, the Sabbath before he was stricken by the hand of the Lord with deafness and dumbness. A little while ago associates in sin, but now looking to the same Jesus for life! O, how his heart went out in love after that man! And how he rejoiced, and breathed the very spirit of thankfulness to God when he saw him seeking the way of peace and life! The true disciple of Christ rejoices as much at seeing others drinking at the fountain of life as in pressing the cup to his own lips. That professed christian, or pretended convert, who is all joy and no love, is a deluded being. To every true convert, his love to God and men is the foundation and principal source of his peace and joy. Faith, hope, and divine consolation, give joy; but love is the very spirit and source of peace and joy.

Mr. BOURNE says he has often played games of cards with those who professed to be christians. He never played for money, but he wishes to caution all young persons not only against the fascinations of the game, but more: against it as leading to other and very destructive vices. He would warn professed christians against the fearful effects of such an

example as they are setting when they engage in such games as find so near an association with gambling, drunkenness, and many other crimes. Although some may indulge in such a game, as he did, without becoming drunkards or gamblers, yet the number who are ensnared in these vices is fearfully great. The only safe course is to avoid, entirely, what will tempt one into the ways of danger and destruction.

At the close of the Sabbath-evening's services, he went home, to his own house, to be permitted to speak once more to the loved ones there. Eighteen days had passed over him since his house became to him as a spectral-prison; where was heard no voice nor sound, but beings were moving to and fro with a noiseless tread. As he approached, with his ear attentive to each whispering or breaking sound, he could hear as it were the voice of the Lord in each rustling leaf. He opened the door, but it now no more swung upon its hinges in gloomy silence like the door of death.—He entered, but not to cry out in exultant joy to his wife and children. He passed the threshold, and bowed in prayer and thanksgiving to God. What a surprise to his wife, and yet how agreeable the surprise! What a meeting, after so strange a separation for eighteen days! What a happy night! And the morning that came—with the voice of children, with the song of praise to God, and with the warm out-gushings of a thankful heart toward the Great, the Gracious, the Holy One, who inhabiteth eternity! A morning of joy for a night of weeping! A garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness! God was acknowledged as the head of the family, and hearts bowed before him in worship. Happy, indeed,—whatever may be their earthly condition—is that family over which God presides.

The slate, with the writing upon it—just as it was presented to Mr. Taylor the day before—was now an object of special care. The last words of that communication assumed a significance at once important and deeply impressive. It now glowed with the fiery light of a prophecy. and the fulfillment had already come. The place had been made fearful by the manifest presence of the angel of God's power. The slate was carefully put away, with the writing

upon it, to remind its owner that what he had written, in the fear of God, had been answered by God in the way in which he chooses to make manifestation of his matchless love. All the circumstances of the case made that Monday morning one of new and thrilling realities. Never did the light of day seem more fully to bear a silent testimony to the goodness of God. Nature seemed all at peace with God; and grace flowed out freely from his throne of light and love. The heart made answer, "God is love."

Mr. BOURNE continued to gain strength, from day to day, and rejoiced in the great mercy of God. He soon caused the stone, upon which he sat when he was stricken of the Lord, to be brought and placed in his front yard; that it might ever remind him of the stroke of the Almighty upon him, when he had chosen judgments from his hand rather than submission to Christ. There the stone now remains, and may be seen by every one who passes that way. When Mr. BOURNE comes in from his walks or journeys abroad, memory and understanding unite in one voice, and say to him, "This is the stone upon which you were made to feel that God is great, and that you are nothing. Remember the Lord's doings with you."

He continued to improve until Saturday, the 28th of November. He attended meeting, and during the meeting he was suddenly taken ill. He felt great weakness, and it seemed to him as though he had reached the time when he must die. Time seemed narrowed to that hour, and life seemed a bubble which was about to be broken. He felt that he had no claim upon God's forbearance, no hold upon life but by His will. He parted with his brethren at the meeting, as though to meet no more. His parting words were uttered in weakness, and he was carried home, so prostrated, and so impressed with the brevity of his time, that he was unable to suppose that he should live any longer than that night. He took his papers and accounts, and delivered them to his wife, explaining what he thought necessary in order to their settlement. He retired to his room; but his thoughts flew away to his children. He went and took them in his arms and kissed them, and bade his mother-in-law farewell. He again went to his bedroom; but he

could not compose himself to lie down. He returned and took his companion by the hand, giving the parting salutation—"Farewell." He then laid himself down, to die if it were the will of God; or to live if it should prove to be his pleasure. He was at rest. What a heavenly calm comes over that soul which can lie down quietly in death's open gate! What an unnatural condition is that in which a man peacefully lays down his life, without dying!

During the night he fell asleep and slept, as he supposed, about two hours, and then found his strength greatly restored. Life was a surprise—its continuance was somewhat of a disappointment. As when a great American statesman, awaking for a moment from what he had supposed would be his last sleep, said, "I yet live;" so he awoke with surprise, to say to himself, "*I yet live.*"

He arose. It was one of those mornings which, to the Christian's eye, open with more than common beauty and loveliness. It was the morning of the Christian Sabbath.—To the devout believer, that morning is doubly adorned. A more glorious sun arose on that morning than the grand luminary which God has hung in the midst of the heavens as the center of our sphere. The light-rays which dart away from that great central sun of the moral universe are burnished with a richer and brighter than a golden lustre.—Its radiant lines are life-giving, and its brightness is the glory of God.

On that day, Sunday, November 29th, he attended meeting three times. It was refreshing to a weary soul, which seemed permitted to wait a little longer in this outer-court of being, to bathe itself anew in the gospel waters of life. How grand were the facts of the gospel! How just and righteous altogether were its precepts and commands! How cheering were its promises! In all its characteristics—how full of life! The day was a day of waiting, and the voice which seemed speaking out from within the veil which rendered spiritual things invisible to mortal eyes, said: "Be still, and know that I am God."

Twice had the sun risen to salute the opening "Day of the Lord," and thrice had it gone down upon the day of the resurrection, since his enlightened eyes had beheld himself an

object of divine compassion in the restoration of his powers of speech and hearing. Cheered and cheerful, he felt at home with the Lord, and yet present with his family; while the last lingering hours of a blessed Lord's Day were departing to the shades of the oblivious past.

"And it shall come to pass in the last days," saith God, "I wtll pour out of my spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my hand-maidens I will pour out, in those days, of my spirit; and they shall prophesy."

On that Sunday night, Mr. BOURNE and his family retired to rest, between the hours of eleven and twelve. Between the hours of twelve and one, as he lay with his back towards the forward side of the bed, suddenly his room seemed all lighted up with most extraordinary brightness, brighter than the light of day. He started with surprise, and saw an image or appearance like a man, in form, standing by the side of his bed. There appeared nothing like a face, but in place of it there was an appearance like the sun, shining in his brightness. A voice, which seemed to proceed from the image before him, said, "Settle up your worldly business, and go to work for me."

He saw that the image held in each hand a crown. In his left hand was a crown, which was perfectly plain. In his right hand was another crown, surpassing in splendor and beauty anything he ever saw. After he had spoken, uttering his command, he disappeared, and all was dark and silent in the room. Mr. BOURNE then awoke his wife, and asked her if she had seen anything. She said that she had seen nothing, but had been asleep.

He began to reason upon these fearful circumstances, and to ask, "Why am I called in this way? I am ignorant of the Bible—I am in debt—I have a family to provide for." Thus he reasoned and argued, in his mind, against the idea of being called to any unusual work for Christ. He heard the clock strike one and two; and immediately after two, his room was lighted up as before. The same image, with the same crowns, and the same brightness, appeared again. He spake again, as follows: "Settle up your worldly business,

and go to work for me. Your family shall be taken care of, and yourself looked out for. Go, open your mouth, and I will fill it."

He then said that he should appear to him again before the judgment day, and immediately departed. Then again all was dark. Mr. BOURNE again awoke his wife and inquired of her if she had seen anything. She said she had not. She inquired, anxiously, why he had twice questioned her in that way.

He reflected upon what he had seen and heard, and concluded that at some time before his death—perhaps at the distance of many years—he should see the same appearance again. He lay for a length of time, considering these things, not imagining that he should see anything of it again at present. After thus remaining in thought for about half an hour, suddenly and unexpectedly to him, the room became again lighted up, and the same image appeared with the plain crown only. At the instant, he had hold of the hand of his wife. He asked her if she saw anything, to which she answered "No!" In a moment, he felt a singular sensation, and became unable again to speak or move. Neither could his wife detach her hand from his. He was then addressed in these words:—"Settle up your worldly business, and go to work for me. Your family shall be taken care of, and yourself looked out for. Go, open your mouth and I will fill it. Go, tell the world what your eyes have seen, and your ears have heard."

He then told him to study the third chapter of Matthew, the third of Mark, and the third of John. After which he put the plain crown upon his head, and told him if he would have the other crown, he must win it. He then repeated as before, "Go, open your mouth, and I will fill it."

When these words were finished, all became dark and silent. The strange sensation, which came over him when he asked his wife if she saw anything, and which seemed to hold him in its imprisoning power, passed off, and he was again in the full use of all his powers.

Mr. BOURNE is positive that he was fully awake, all of the time of these visions, although he is sure that he was becom-

ing sleepy—almost asleep—immediately before the first one. But in an instant he was completely aroused, and after that he was not able to sleep during the night.

The power of the visions appears to have been upon him only, for while every object in his room appeared perfectly visible to him, and the light of the room transcending the brightness of the clear day, to his wife all was dark. He cannot, therefore, suppose that the power of the Lord so affected the room, or the atmosphere of the room as to cause this appearance, but that his own powers of vision were so enlarged that he saw every object distinctly, without the aid of natural or artificial light, and, at the same time, he was permitted to see what he may call the glory of God, in the representation of Christ. He knows that he saw and heard with great distinctness, and he testifies to what he saw and heard.

He feels constrained—notwithstanding his conscious defects of education, and other circumstances which to him seemed to forbid—to go out into the world, and tell the facts in his case as they transpired.

The doctor who attended Mr. Bourne, to stop the intense excitement about the case, in five days after his restoration, wrote the following letter to the Providence Journal:

Westerly, R. I., Nov. 20th, 1857.

On a visit in a neighboring village, a day or two since, my attention was directed to the articles in your journal of the 17th and 18th instants, relating to the "Singular Case," the "Tough Story," the "Strange Story from Westerly." *A singular case* it certainly was, but when shorn of the embellishments attached to the narrative, it ceases to be either a tough or a strange story.

The case of Mr. Ansel Bourne passed under my professional notice and care, and, with your permission, I will give a truthful description of the same.

I have known Mr. Bourne for seven years past, and during that period, he has invariably conducted himself with propriety in the community, so much so as to merit and retain the respect of his fellow citizens. In the early part of August last, or rather about the middle of the month, Mr.

Bourne suffered a "coup de soliel," which was of a very formidable character, and from its effects he nearly lost his life. Having nearly recovered from the illness, he thought himself able to return to his occupation, that of a house carpenter. Contrary to my advice, and without my knowledge, he left his home, and went to South Kingston to superintend the completion of a dwelling-house he had been engaged upon. On the 14th of September, he was brought home again ill, and suffering from a severe cerebral disturbance. My attendance was continued till the 2d of October, and I heard nothing more of him till the 28th of that month, when, in haste, I was summoned to him. On reaching his bedside, I found him (perfectly insensible)—very much in the condition of a person in a syncope, swoon or fainting fit. The pupils of his eyes were quite insensible to light, widely dilated, and not contracting on the application of sudden and vivid light. He was, in fact, (perfectly insensible). Powerful counter-irritants, were applied, to which he gave no evidence of feeling. Various, and I may say, judicious remedies were resorted to, which, as this is not intended to be a medical treatise, it is not necessary to enumerate. Suffice it to say, that on my visit to him on the following Friday, I found consciousness had, in a measure, been restored. (His sight was then evidently perfect, but there still continued great disturbance of his brain, confusion of intellect, with vacant staring. I mention these circumstances, to show the fact that Mr. Bourne's case is clearly attributable to a disturbed and disordered condition of the functions of the brain, and, if possible, to do away with the absurd and superstitious notion that there is anything marvelous or miraculous in the case.)

(The loss of hearing and of speech was owing to a paralysis of the motor nerve of the tongue, known as the hypoglossal nerve, and of the auditory nerve.) The recovery was owing to no wonderful nor miraculous power, but may be accounted for in a very rational and philosophical manner. Mr. Bourne had been treated actively by electro-galvinism and those remedies which intelligent physicians resort to in the treatment of paralysis.

(The legitimate result of the treatment was recovery. It

was not sudden nor unexpected.) (The opinion expressed to the patient and his friends, that the remedies used were well calculated to restore him, and, in my judgment, would do so, was realized; and to the sober-minded and rational portion of the community created no emotions, save those of pleasure, in hearing of the restoration to comparative health of a fellow citizen, whose deprivation of speech and hearing had elicited sympathy and regret.)

Mr. Bourne is a sensible and intelligent man, and views his own case in a rational and christian-like manner.

On conversation with him, since Sunday last, at which time his hearing and speech were restored, I find that there is no desire on his part to encourage the absurd opinion that he has been the subject of a miracle, but attributes his recovery, by the blessing of God Almighty, the author and giver of every good and perfect gift, to the means and measures adopted by his physician.

I am, sir, very respectfully yours,

WILLIAM TORREY THURSTON, M. D.

ADMISSIONS OF DOCTOR THURSTON.

1. That such a case was known at Westerly, R. I., on the 28th day of October, 1857, as that a man, whose name was ANSEL BOURNE, suddenly became deaf, dumb and blind.

2. That for seven years, as a citizen, he had enjoyed the respect of his fellow-citizens.

3. That the physician called to him, found him in such a condition that he judged him to be "perfectly insensible."

4. That his eyes were "insensible to light."

5. That two days after the physician was first called to Mr. BOURNE, he found his sight "evidently perfect."

6. That Mr. BOURNE's powers of speech and hearing were restored, without the Doctor's being present, on Sunday, November 15th, although he assumes to know that it was not sudden, which Mr. BOURNE affirms was sudden and instantaneous, and to which hundreds also were witnesses.

7. The representations made of the case produced a great excitement in Rhode Island, so that one paper, published forty-five miles distant, had three different articles relating to the subject, within the space of a very few days.

8. That Dr. Thurston conversed with Mr. BOURNE, who then only attributed his recovery to the blessing of God Almighty, and his physician. Mr. BOURNE says that at that time he hesitated not desiring to attribute to the miraculous power of God what could by any possibility be accounted for upon natural principles; and he was slow to assume that he had been the subject of miraculous power. But his doubts upon that subject have since been taken away.

MISSTATEMENTS OF DR. THURSTON.

In the letter of Dr. Thurston, are distinct errors, which Mr. BOURNE would correct; not wishing, however, to charge the Doctor with intentional falsehood, or intentional misre-

presentation; but only as trying, "if possible, to do away with the notion that there was anything marvelous or miraculous in the case." Of course Dr. Thurston must make such a statement—in opposition to the opinions which he admits to have prevailed, that there was something miraculous in the case—as might serve the purpose he had in view. Mr. BOURNE has the kindest feelings toward Dr. Thurston, and, as a physician, has confidence in him. But in relation to the subject now in question he must speak the truth:

1. The Doctor says that, on the 28th of October, he found Mr. BOURNE "perfectly insensible." To the Doctor this doubtless appeared so. But, although he was helpless, he was perfectly sensible of all around him, which, deprived of his powers, he could recognize. His thoughts were free and unrestrained.

2. Dr. Thurston says that "the loss of his hearing and speech was owing to a paralysis of the motor nerve of the tongue, known as the hypoglossal nerve, and of the auditory nerve." Had this been so he could not have used his tongue, at will, for anything. But he had a free use of his tongue for everything but to speak with.

3. Dr. T. says—speaking of the medical treatment of the case—"The legitimate result of the treatment was recovery, it was not sudden nor unexpected." The answer to this must be plain and simple. The recovery took place in the presence of several hundred persons, and was as sudden as thought. It was at a moment, and in a place when and where several hundreds of persons all had their eyes fixed directly upon him, and witnessed the immediate proofs of the fact.

Whether those who were constrained to believe that it was by divine power that these things took place are to be considered as irrational, every one must judge for himself.—Every man who is rational must judge of the story, even with all of Dr. Thurston's modifications admitted, that it is, after all, rather "a strange story." But the facts known by hundreds of christian people in Westerly, deny the verity of his modifications. Mr. BOURNE has considered his letter entitled to more notice than any other of the many reports in the case, because Dr. Thurston has the air of giving a

scientific explanation. Therefore he has given it this notice and review.

Mr. Bourne knows what has taken place with him, and feels the influence of these dread realities, too much to desire to contradict any man who may be skeptical as to the depth of what he has experienced; but he considers it his duty to testify fully and distinctly to what he has seen and heard; and also to the real facts in his case. He does it, hoping that honest persons will consider and profit by the lessons of his experience.

It is the everywhere-prevalent plea of the professed people of God that all miraculous manifestations from God have ceased. It is said, "They are no longer necessary." It is admitted by all that miracles have once been necessary to confirm to men the power of Christ. But they say it is not so now. It is but reasonable that we ask, to what end were they every necessary, that they are not now? The answer anticipated, is this: "Miracles were necessary, when the gospel was first preached, as a direct confirmation of its truth; and of the power of its Author. But when Christianity became established, its fruits, in the reformation and christianization of men, confirmed its character, and the Divinity of its Author." This is, certainly, an important argument. Had it an application to the professed church of God now, it would stand as a strong argument. But the corruption, the impurity, the worldliness of the church, in our times, hurts the argument dreadfully.

God, in his great mercy, gives to those of every age lights which are equal to the darkening influences which surround them; if they seek after or desire truth. And was there ever a time when the darkening influences of spiritual wickedness were greater than now? And where, we ask, are those churches which are so christianized that the purity of their lives serves to convince infidels and the world that christianity was of a divine origin—that Christ was divine? Is not the light of the church—professing though it does to be christian—a mere shadow of moral darkness, compared with the life, the temper, and the character of the founder of christianity? If the world could see the church presenting before it the life-character of Jesus, it would be more

convincing, and more persuasive, than the mightiest miracle which the ages of time have ever presented. The greatest and noblest wonder which God has ever given to the scrutiny of human eyes is A PERSON OF CHRIST-LIKE CHARACTER.—The life of such a man is an enigma that no infidel or wordly philosopher can solve.

The present age presents a church with very many professors, and with but few christians. The way that Jesus made narrow, men have made wider. The gate which he made strait, men have made broader.

The world seems intoxicated with all manner of spiritual and Satanic delusions, working wonders, which, were it possible, would deceive the very chosen ones of God. Church-novelties have taken the place of godliness, humility, care for the poor, and works of practical goodness, such as Jesus exhibited in his life. What light does the church present, with its sectarian sinnings, its tinseled vanity, its pomp of parade, its shameless scandals, and its secreted sins, to convince unbelievers that God is? Is not a corrupt church the greatest and most effectual machine for the manufacture of infidels and infidelity? If so, shall not God, in his fullness of mercy, stretch forth his hand, and manifest his power, to save the unbelieving, when they become bold and confident in their unbelief? It certainly appears consistent with the character of God, as he is revealed in the bible, that he should manifest his hand in power, when his professed people are so given to their own ways and vanities, that they show no christian example, and thereby, when they preach Christ in word, deny him in their works.

The circumstances, which attend miraculous manifestations, are not such that those who are not eye-witness of them all, could not pretend to any other explanation. When Jesus arose from the dead, the Jews could pretend to account for the absence of his body from the sepulchre. They persuaded the guards to say, "His disciples came by night and stole him away, while we slept." It was a wicked lie, for if the disciples had thus stolen him away, they would never have believed in his resurrection, and have hazarded their lives continually by preaching it. If the Jews had stolen his body, they would readily have produced it, to disprove the

preaching of the apostles. But any pretence, however untrue, would be accredited by many, rather than believe truth which declares the strong working of God. So it has always been. So it was when Jesus was in the world. So it was when prophets prophesied in the name of the Lord. Human nature runs in its old channels, even now.

The lights which shine around the gospel are not such as to compel people to believe, who will deal dishonestly with evidence. God shades his hand-writing, in these things, so that those who are disposed to close their eyes against truth can see nothing. The truths of Christ never really take root, except in honest hearts.

When Jesus appeared in the world, the religion of men was nearly all mere profession and pretense. The votaries of varying sects, multiplied and multiform, were zealously devout, each in their way. God manifested his power and presence by *working*. Men wickedly persecuting the Church of Christ were smitten with blindness. So was it with Saul of Tarsus. And so it was with one whom Paul rebuked for his sins of opposition. The eyes of honest inquirers were opened to the light by miracles. So it was with the praying Saul. So it was with begging Bartimeus. So it was with those who wept by the wayside. And God is the same being of mercy now, that he was eighteen hundred years ago. If men desire truth—if they seek it honestly—if really they are honest in unbelief, being driven into darkness by his professed people's corruption, he will not leave them without sufficient witness to throw the responsibility on them.

The circumstances of the case of Ansel Bourne are worthy of close and candid consideration. On the 28th day of October, 1857, he was an atheist, despising the Christian religion, and disregarding its claims. In the hour and moment of his bitterest reasonings against God, disputing within himself against showing any respect to the Christian Church, in the place where he lived, and choosing in his own mind most fearful judgments, rather than go to meeting, he was taken at his word, and rendered deaf and dumb. Blindness also fell upon him, and he was utterly cast down. It is certainly very strange that such an awful and very unusual calamity should have fallen upon a man just at the moment when it must ap-

pear to him as a dreadful reply to his thoughts of rebellion. He can read over and over again the hand-writing of that moment's angry thoughts, and remember what befel him there. And how can he believe that the powerful response to his internal expression of preference for judgments, was by chance? When, in the secrecy of his heart, he said, "I would rather be deaf and dumb. than go to the Christian Chapel," the answer came forthwith. in the silent application of a most fearful power, "You shall be deaf, and dumb, and blind, for a season." God wrote out that sentence on the inner table of his conscious being, and left him in the deepest darkness, to read it by reason's lamp. He read it—at first in fear, asking himself, "Is it possible that the Most High God has come so near to me?" He read afterwards—holding it calmly and reading it carefully—and he believed that the sentence upon him was in the hand-writing of God.

Then he acknowledged God as righteous—holy—wise—but the acknowledgment ran out only upon his silent, trembling thought-lines. Men—men whom he had injured—stood before him in his blindness, and he wanted to ask their forgiveness. How could he? His thoughts were unutterable. God had put his hand over his eyes, that he could not see to write; over his mouth that he could not speak. His faculties of utterance were all shut up in the deep dungeon of darkness. Would the hand, which was upon him, release his tongue, that he might speak? No, not yet! Oh, how painful! Could he not be allowed, at least, to see, that he might communicate his desire for the forgiveness of those he had injured?

When he was humbled, to regard men, and to desire a reconciliation with men, he was permitted again to look upon men, and to communicate his wishes to them. His sight was restored, instantaneously.

Look upon these circumstances, skeptics, unbelievers! Does it not comport with the character of a good and holy being, that he should have met the stricken sinner with a measure of relief, right there?—that he should have granted him a wish so necessary to his full repentance, as that of humbling himself before his fellow men?—of asking the forgiveness of those he had injured?

And what shall we say of the medical experiments? Did they penetrate the system, and, lightning-like, drive palsy from the optic nerve, almost before the application began; restoring perfect sight in twenty-six hours from the moment of blindness? Did those judicious remedies pinch out a perfect paralysis from the optic nerve, or the eye, in an instant of time—for sight came to Mr. BOURNE instantaneously—and did they yet play away in vain upon the auditory nerve, and the motor nerve of the tongue, for more than two full weeks afterwards? These questions certainly involve the subject of scientific success in the case in some difficulty. Even Doctor Thurston admits that his sight was perfect, two days after he was taken blind. Does it look like something gradually brought about? Let every honest-hearted man and woman consider well that the works of God are great, glorious, and consistent with the nature of his designs.

Is there any reason for supposing that a paralytic—especially one who is suffering a suspension of natural faculties like those of speech and hearing—would remain unaffected while the prescribed remedies were applied from day to day, and then a perfect cure take place, at a time when there was no reason, from the nature of the remedial agents, to expect it, if those agents produced the cure. For eighteen days Mr. BOURNE continued without the least power of speech or hearing, notwithstanding all medical applications. From Wednesday to Sunday, he had been attending public meetings, talking only through a slate and pencil, and hearing only through the same medium. There was no gradual recovery of his powers of speech or hearing; yet, this would have been the case, in a cure of paralysis by electro-galvanism, according to the best evidences. But there was no progress towards this end; and to the admissions of Doctor Thurston, which have already been specified, must now be added this:

The Doctor admits, in his letter of November 20th, that the restoration of the hearing and speech of Mr. BOURNE took place on Sunday, November 15th—not all along the time, upon a graduating scale. His language is, "On conversation with him, since Sunday last, at which time his hearing and speech were restored,"—in which he admits the fact, which is a fact, that it took place at a definite time; not

all along the way, through the whole course of eighteen days.

What power was there, electro-galvanic, in a religious congregation?—what in a pulpit?—what in the pious sympathies of a praying, weeping congregation? What was there in the singular prophecy, which remained written upon the slate, and which a moment before had been read without its author being able to hear anything of it? The time, the place, the circumstances of the moment, when the cure was effected, were all most suitable to a manifestation of divine power. They were by no means suited to the idea of a medical success.

As his sight became perfect (the Doctor admits it) at a *particular time*, so his powers of hearing and speech were restored (the Doctor admits it too) at a *specified time*.

Mr. Bourne's powers were taken away, as he testifies, at a moment when his heart rebelled in almost defiant wrath against God. They were fully and completely restored, in the very moment when he sought to do the utmost in his power to honor God and confess him before men. He was stricken down when the eyes of other men were upon him, and it was in an instant He was restored in an instant, when hundreds were gazing upon him—very many of whom were praying for the recovery of his powers. Before he was stricken down he was decidedly irreligious. Since his restoration he has shown the deepest devotion to the service of God and the conversion of his fellow-men.

There is not to be pointed out, in all his wonderful experience—admitting it to be altogether miraculous—a single circumstance which is unworthy of the character of God. "These things have not been done in a corner." It has all been open to the criticisms of men. It has been no slight change—no humbug—wonder—but a veritable series of facts, witnessed by many, and which have become greatly noised abroad. It has not been some wonder, performed by some cunning and deceitful priest; but a work of dreadful power—positive and unmistakable—upon a known Infidel, a man as determined in opposition to Christianity as Saul of Tarsus was; and by it he has been brought to acknowledge God, and submit to him.

If any are disposed to scoff, that shall be their business,

if they seek no better. Candid persons will consider and judge reverently before the Lord.

The visions which are related by Mr. BOURNE, are not unworthy of Christ. If the blindness, the dumbness, and the deafness, and the recovery from all of these, are miraculous—and how can they be otherwise—the visions are wholly consistent therewith. If Christ has been miraculously manifested, it cannot be that it was altogether for the benefit of one unbeliever. In the visions Mr. BOURNE is commanded to go and tell what he has seen and heard. He is to go and tell the impressive facts of God's dealings with him. God wants a witnessing church—a church which will testify convincingly to the truth, either in its experiences of God's deliverance, in times of great trial, or in its high and holy character. "He chooses the weak things of the world to confound the wise; and things that are not to bring to nought the things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence."

Mr. BOURNE allowed himself to be driven to atheism by the corruptions among professed christians—by the unchristrian character of the professed church of Christ. The language of the Great Master to his ancient disciples—"If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness?"—should be repeated again, in these days, to his professed people. The good works of ancient christians convinced unbelievers that Christ was divine—christianity the true religion. Now, shall it be, must it be, that the evil works of professed christians shall drive honest men into unbelief?

If God has stretched forth his hand, as it seems, it is a fearful indication to his professed people, at the same time that it is glorious to contemplate. Will he next rain snares and terrible judgments upon his professed people, because of their selfishness, their pride, their sectarian bigotry, their neglect of the poor, their contempt of faithfulness among his ministers, and their multiplied excuses for the great and giant wrongs of society? What will he do next?

Mr. BOURNE has left his worldly occupation—a Carpenter—to work for Him who was once known on earth as "the Carpenter's Son." He goes out, trusting in God, to tell his

story of what he has seen and heard. He is afraid to neglect, yet he loves to obey. He feels all the difficulties of his position, the lack of literary attainments, the incredulity of men; and yet he goes with the confidence that he will be sustained, if faithful, in that way which shall be best for him.

The *writer* of this sketch has taken from his lips, and from others who were eye-witnesses, the facts as now presented. He has followed the recital of these things, to be astonished at the full evidence of connection and harmony between all the parts; and fully believes in the perfect sincerity of Mr. BOURNE, in the representations which he has given. And so far as this expression of his conviction of Mr. BOURNE's deep sincerity is due to him, and to the work which he is engaged in, it is now cheerfully given over his own signature.

A. G. COMINGS,
Minister of the Gospel.

OFFICE OF THE "CHRISTIAN MESSENGER,"
Irvington, New Jersey, Jany., 1858.

It does not seem necessary to add any testimonials to the facts narrated in this work. The Press has taken extensive notice of it, and none have ever pretended to deny the great leading fact of the occurrence of this strange event. But, not knowing what may transpire to render other testimony important, or to say the least more satisfactory, I take great pleasure in adding the following to what has already been said:

I was laboring in Westerly while Mr. BOURNÉ was deprived of his speech and hearing, and can testify to the truth of what is related of him after he first came to the church until his speech and hearing were restored. It was at the close of my discourse on the afternoon of the 15th of November last, when this most remarkable circumstance took place. All that is related in reference to it, is strictly true.

This offering is made to the public with the hope that it may be useful to mankind. We have procured a likeness of Mr. BOURNE, expressly for the work, engraved by Bright-

ly, Waters & Co., of New York, and it is a most perfect representation of him.

If, after all that has been presented, any person should rise up so in love with unbelief as to discredit the statements made of this case, we refer them to the following persons well known in Westerly, who with hundreds of others would cheerfully testify to their truthfulness, if called on to do so:

REV. JOHN TAYLOR,
DEA. TAYLOR PENDLETON,
JOSHUA THOMPSON, JR.,
CHARLES W. THOMPSON,
DEA. BERNARD W. PIERCE,
AARON PIERCE,
JAMES L. GAVITT,
HORATIO BERRY,
AMOS ADAMS,
HALSEY GREENE,
WILLIAM GREENE,
BURRILL THOMPSON,
OLIVER D. HALL,

Or any other person who has lived in Westerly the past year, 1857—all of which is most respectfully submitted to a candid public.

MOSES CUMMINGS.